

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2004



2009

Session document

24.1.2006

B6-0074/2006

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

further to Question for Oral Answer B6-0347/2005
pursuant to Rule 108(5) of the Rules of Procedure
on behalf of the Committee on Budgetary Control
on National Management Declarations

European Parliament resolution on National Management Declarations

The European Parliament,

- having regard to Rule 274 of the Treaty,
 - having regard to Rule 108(5) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas, in its 2003 discharge resolution (T6-0092/2005, adopted on 12 April 2005 by an overwhelming majority), it proposed that each Member State should provide an ex-ante disclosure statement and an annual ex-post statement of assurance as regards its use of EU funding,
- B. whereas the Commission welcomed the initiative and included it in its Communication on a roadmap to an integrated internal control framework,
- C. whereas the European Court of Auditors' findings clearly show that the main problems as regards the legality and regularity of underlying transactions are located first and foremost at Member State level,
- D. whereas, on 8 November 2005, the ECOFIN Council did not accept Parliament's proposal regarding national-level declarations,
1. Welcomes the Commission's support for the proposed new instruments and recognises that the Commission has made the issue of unqualified assurance one of its strategic priorities for the period up to 2009;
 2. Is strongly convinced that what is needed is not more controls but better controls and that assurance has to come primarily from the Member States and not via more Commission on-the-spot controls;
 3. Believes that, without strong progress towards effective implementation by the Member States of supervisory and control systems and without a firm commitment to address identified weaknesses in these systems, the Commission will not be able to obtain adequate information about the legality and the regularity of transactions;
 4. Expresses its deep disappointment at the fact that the Council was not represented at Parliament's debate with the Court of Auditors on the Annual Report 2004 and the implication that the Council has little interest in the discharge procedure;
 5. Calls on the Presidency-in-Office of the Council and the representatives of the Member States to give the discharge procedure higher priority in future;
 6. Considers national-level declarations an important and simple instrument in improving the implementation of supervisory and control systems, and believes them to be essential to

increasing Member States' accountability;

7. Considers also that such declarations are in full conformity with Article 274 of the Treaty¹;
8. Recognises that in some case these national declarations may need to comprise in practice several declarations within a national framework, rather than one alone, in order to acknowledge the federal and decentralised political systems in some Member States;
9. Emphasises that the overriding principle advocated by Parliament is that the relevant political authorities within the Member States take full responsibility for the funds placed at their disposal;
10. Draws attention to the fact that effectively implemented supervisory and control systems are of utmost importance, particularly in the EU context where a large proportion of the budget consists of high-risk expenditure because it depends on information supplied by beneficiaries;
11. Considers an unqualified statement of assurance as impossible to achieve without significant improvements in Member States' implementation of supervisory and control systems, and regrets that criticism of the EU budget and the way money is used by 'Brussels' will continue under the present circumstances;
12. Recalls that, on 8 June 2005 (P6_TA(2005)0224), it stated that in the absence of the requested national declarations it would be difficult for it to accept a new interinstitutional agreement on the new financial perspective for the period 2007-2013;
13. Calls on the Council to review its conclusions from the meeting on 8 November 2005 in order to pave the way for a constructive dialogue with Parliament on the new financial perspective and in order to establish and implement effective supervisory and control systems on EU expenditure in the Member States, which is what European taxpayers expect;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments of the Member States, the Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors, the European Investment Bank and Member States' national and regional audit institutions.

¹ 'Member States shall cooperate with the Commission to ensure that the appropriations are used in accordance with the principles of sound financial management.'